

## Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GE, JA

SUBJECT: GDR OBSERVES ANNIVERSARY OF DRESDEN BOMBING

1. THE GDR OBSERVED THE 31ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOMBING OF DRESDEN ON FEBRUARY 13 WITHA WREATH LAYING CEREMONY ORGAINZED BY THE DISTRICT SED LEADERSHIP AND THE DRESDEN CITY COUNCIL AT THE MONUMENT COMMEMORATING THE 35,000 WHO DIED IN THE ATTACKS. A BRIEF ADN REPORT CARRIED FEBRUARY QR IN NUES DEUTSCHLAND(ND) REFERS TO THE " SENSELESS DESTRUCTION" OF THE CITY THROUGH " ANGLO-AMERICAN BOMBINGS."

2. THIS IS THE SECOND REFERENCE IN THE EAST GERMAN PRESS DURING THE PAST MONTH TO THE BOMBING OF DRESDEN. ON JANUARY 12 ND REPORTED ON A PERFORMANCE BY THE DRESDEN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA IN HIROSHIMA DURING ITS RECENT TOUR OF JAPAN. THE ARTICLE DWELLED ON THE  
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SYMBOLISM OF CULTURAL CONTACTS BETWEEN HIROSHIMA AND

A GDR CITY THAT HAD ITSELF FALLEN VICTIM TO" ANGLO-AMERICAN TERROR BOMBING" SHORTLY BEFORE THE END OF THE WAR. IT DESCRIBED HOW MEMBERS OF HE DRESDEN PHILHARMONIC HAD LAID A WREATH AT A MONUMENT TO THE HIROSHIMA VICTMS BEFORE VISITING THE HIROSHIMA MUSEUM OF PEACE WHERE THAY WERE REMINDED OF " THE BESTIAL ACT OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM". THE ARTICLE WENT ON TO REPORT THAT CITIZENS OF HIROSHIMA ARE STILL DYING FROM RADIATION AS RESULT OF THE BOMBING AND CLAIMED THAT THE ORCHESTRA MEMERS ARRIVED AT THE HIROSHIMA TRAIN STATION JUST IN TIME TO WITNESS A SIT-DOWN STRIKE BY JAPANESE CITIZENS PROTESTING U.S. ATOMIC TESTING. IT CONCLUDED THAT THE MAYOR OF HIROSHIM HAD INFORMED THE DRESDEN GROUP THAT A JAPANESE EXHIBIT ON THE " ATOMIC CRIME" AND THE REBUILDING OF HIROSHIM WAS IN PREPARATION AND WOULD BE SHOWN IN DRESDEN.

3. COMMENT: THE GDR, IS, OF COURSE, HIGHLY SELECTIVE IN THE WAY IT TREATS THE END OF WORLD WAR II. DURING THE " THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION FROM FASCISM" IN MAY 1975, THE FALL OF BERLIN WAS CELEBRATED IN THE GDR WITH FIREWORKS AND A PEOPLE'S FESTIVAL ON ALEXANDERPLATZ IN EAST BERLIN, WHILE THE FRG WAS PUBLICLY BERATED FOR OBSERVING THE OCCASION WITH SOLEMN CEREMONIES IN HONOR OF THE GERMANS WHO DIED IN THE WAR. IN CONTRAST, THE GDR LINE ON DRESDEN IS THAT INNOCENT GERMANS DIED NEEDLESSLY AT THE HANDS OF THE " IMPERIALIST" AGGRESSORS. EMBOFF WHO VISITED DRESDEN NOVEMBER 1975 RECEIVED THIS GDR VERSION OF THE BOMBING FROM LOCAL OFFICIALS WHO CLAIMED NEVER TO HAVE HEARD THAT THE SOVIET ARMY HAD REQUESTED THE ALLIED AIR RAIDS ON DRESDEN IN 1945. IN SUM, THE GDR APPEARS TO BE MOURNFUL ABOUT GERMAN LOSSES IN THE WAR ONLY WHEN SED POLICIES SO DICTATE. THE PRESENT CSE PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE ANOTHER LICK AT U.S. IMPERIALISM AND TO POINT UP A MACABRE FUNDAMENT FOR GDR CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH JAPAN.GROVE

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